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27 February 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Cushman

SUBJECT: Press Inquiry Regarding the National Intelligence Resources Board (NIRB)

1. Late on 26 February Jake Goodwin informed me that Mr. Orr Kelly, military reporter for The Washington Star, had called to obtain information about the NIRB. Mr. Kelly noted that Secretary Laird's Defense budget statement to Congress on 20 February had referred to Assistant Secretary Froehlke's appointment as the Defense member of the NIRB. Mr. Kelly had learned that you were the Chairman of the NIRB and he wanted to discuss the NIRB with you.

2. I informed Mr. Goodwin that you were not available and would be out of town until Monday, 2 March. I said that I had not seen Mr. Laird's statement and would have to study it before I could consult you and provide guidance for Mr. Goodwin. Meanwhile I suggested that Mr. Goodwin stall Mr. Kelly and try to learn more about Mr. Kelly's sources and the nature of his interest in the NIRB.

3. Mr. Goodwin informed me on 27 February that Mr. Kelly had discussed the NIRB with Mr. Froehlke, who had identified you as Chairman. Mr. Kelly also said that his interest stemmed from his desire to put together an article on "how the members of the Intelligence Community got along together." He had received the impression from Pentagon sources that replacement of a DIA intelligence specialist on the NIRB by an administrative specialist such as Mr. Froehlke indicated that the NIRB was going to take on a more active role in Intelligence Community management. Mr. Kelly wondered in this context "how the agencies were getting along."

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4. Pages 84 and 85 of Secretary Laird's unclassified defense budget statement contain only one brief mention of the NIRB (as stated in para 1, above), in the context of a general discussion of the Secretary's efforts to coordinate and control more effectively the use of DOD intelligence resources.

AT 5. I understand from [redacted] that the NIRB was publicly mentioned once before. In late 1968 [redacted] agreed that the STA Department of State might mention the NIRB in a budget request for an additional staff position to service State's NIRB account. This affair did not attract any attention.

6. The present situation does have the potential for generating undesirable publicity -- possibly inspired by misleading Pentagon corridor gossip, possibly encouraged by DIA and/or NSA officers to harass the NIRB or even to generate pressure for Board membership for DOD program managers. On the other hand, I see no harm to you or the Director from setting the matter straight in a brief acknowledgement of the existence and purpose of the NIRB. This would show the Director as defender of the taxpayers' dollar and make clear the advisory role of the NIRB and the Director with respect to DOD resource decisions. It would also put in perspective any bizarre stories coming out of Froehlke's office.

7. I recommend that you not talk to Mr. Kelly, but that Mr. Goodwin be authorized to give Kelly a brief background statement in low key on the purpose and functions of the NIRB. I also recommend that you discuss this with the Director.

[redacted] STA
EA/DDCI

Attachment:
Background material for
statement on the NIRB

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